

CRAFT +
PLACE

IN THE
HIGHLANDS
+ ISLANDS



A. Bonhoga
Gallery Craft
Makers Exhibition
(Johnson, 2018)

Introduction

THE CRAFTS SECTOR IS DIFFICULT TO MEASURE AS IT IS MADE UP OF MULTIPLE SMALL BUSINESSES AND SOLE TRADERS, OFTEN WORKING ACROSS A RANGE OF DISCIPLINES WITHIN AND OUTWITH CRAFT BUSINESSES, COVERING A TREMENDOUS RANGE OF QUALITY, MARKETS AND OUTPUTS. The Crafts Council calculated a Gross Value Added (GVA: the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy) across the UK of £745m from craft businesses, with £81m of this coming from microbusinesses. For Scotland, this represented figures of £64m GVA from craft businesses and just £4m of this coming from microbusinesses¹. As such, crafts businesses are not often viewed as a high growth or high profit sector, which restricts the levels of resource and funding it can use and attract. However, it is still viewed as an important sector in relation to small business development and through its close links to local, regional and national cultural heritage, while gaining increasing recognition within technological innovation through applying high levels of material knowledge and craft skills². Perhaps the most pressing issue regarding craft makers professionally is a low average gross income, with research estimating more than half of craft makers across the UK reporting an income of less than £5k per year³.

The Highlands & Islands region of Scotland faces particular challenges that exacerbate further fragmentation in its craft sector. Work undertaken by the Highlands & Islands Enterprise body cited low levels of entrepreneurialism, start-ups and innovation, dispersed

working communities and a lack of technological infrastructure⁴. Core craft support organisations such as Craft Scotland and Applied Arts Scotland, while reaching many businesses in the area, primarily operate within and around Scotland's central belt. However, craft businesses can also thrive in rural Scotland due to their relation to cultural heritage, tourism and contribution to local economies.

It is from this standpoint that this pamphlet seeks to open up a greater understanding of these contributions and relationships in practice, and provide a better understanding of the role of 'place' for craft makers who have chosen to live and work in the Highlands & Islands of Scotland. We did this through a series of interviews with craft makers across three contexts: Orkney Isles, Shetland Isles and a spread of individual cases across the remaining Highlands & Islands region. These interviews aimed to gather insights on the interests, challenges and opportunities faced by craft makers across the region in the expectation that this can inform future projects, research and how they can be strategically better integrated into existing services, industries and policy in the context of longstanding regional economic challenges.

¹Crafts Council (2014). *Measuring the Craft Economy: Defining and Measuring Craft, Report 3*. London: Crafts Council. http://www.craftscouncil.org.uk/content/files/Measuring_the_craft_economy.pdf

²Crafts Council (2014). *Measuring the Craft Economy: Defining and Measuring Craft, Report 3*. London: Crafts Council. http://www.craftscouncil.org.uk/content/files/KPMG_CC_Innovation_Report.pdf

³Council, C., Scotland, C., & Ireland, C. N. (2012). *Craft in an Age of Change*. London: Crafts Council. http://wcc-europe.org/sites/default/files/Craft_in_an_Age_of_Change.pdf and <http://www.nesta.org.uk/blog/where-do-creatives-cluster>

⁴Highlands & Islands Enterprise (2013). *Creative Industries Strategy, 2014–2019, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Inverness*. <http://timeline.hie.co.uk/media/1361/creative-industries-creativeplusindustriesplusstrategy.pdf>

How we explored CRAFT+ PLACE

The approach taken for this research was to build on previous work and networks established through the Design Innovation for New Growth (DING) project⁵. This allowed us to undertake three separate case studies in Orkney, Shetland and a selection of individual cases across the wider Highlands & Islands region. DING has been delivering workshops and creative enterprise support in these same areas, including the crafts sector, using a model based on four areas of growth. These are defined on the right.

We did 27 interviews and used these growth parameters to inform questions to try and capture each practitioner's experiences, challenges and ambitions, and how these related to where they were based. These then also provide the structure for presenting each of the regional case studies in this pamphlet. The interviewees were mainly craft professionals, where some form of crafts-based practice was their main source of income or occupation. Most interviews took place in the practitioner's workplace, with a small number only able to be done through audio-recorded phone conversations.

The findings from the interviews and their analysis are firstly presented as case studies reflecting the DING model growth parameters, then presented as a selection of key themes reflecting perspectives related to Craft and Place, and finally as key reflections on how this could inform development in the Highlands & Islands crafts sector.

NETWORK GROWTH

new and enriched connections and communities of practice

KNOWLEDGE GROWTH

new and enriched skills, experience and processes

VALUE GROWTH

new and enriched products, services and business models

MARKET GROWTH

new and enriched audiences and communication

⁵*Design Innovation for New Growth (DING): design as a strategy for growth in the creative economy of the Highlands & Islands. A Follow-on project funded through the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Project profile can be found here: <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=AH%2FPO13325%2F1>*

Orkney

A LANDSCAPE OF HERITAGE

NETWORK Orkney has a highly visible cultural history and ancient heritage, with many participants expressing this rich landscape as a source of inspiration. One recognised Orkney as an important historical thoroughfare, from Neolithic monuments (see image B), to the Napoleonic war towers and remnants of WW2, making islanders more outward looking and open. This visible heritage emerges as rich material to be explored and expressed. One participant, as a sculptor, talked about a project to change their small Orkney parish from 'the forgettable parish', as quoted in the nineteenth century, to a place of interest through placing 'twelve sculptures on all the old routes and on the boundary lines'. Such richness of stories and material imbues these islands with a connectedness between residents, businesses and visitors and an urge to express and enjoy these qualities again and anew. This is enriched by existing collective organisations and events, such as the craft trail and multiple festivals, which enable and encourage exploration of this rich landscape.

FOLLOWING A GENERATION

KNOWLEDGE Across the interviews there was a recognition of a generation who had established themselves around 30-40 years ago, one which the regional Arts Development Officer said helped develop 'a sort of core of Orkney craft making industry', with jewellery as 'the prime example of that.' From this generation of craft makers came a body of knowledge, experience and resource that has been reinvested at various levels. One leading jeweller was cited many times as investing in emerging practitioners' work, including a local woodturner (see image C) alongside other jewellers and crafts, while a printmaker and former weaver shared how they moved on from making tapestries to supporting the next generation through activities with the Pier Arts centre⁶.

11 interviews in June 2018

AN OVERVIEW OF
THE DISCIPLINES
REPRESENTED IN THESE
INTERVIEWS.

Council Arts Officer

Printmaker / Gallery Public
Engagement

Artist / Island Ranger /
Festival Organiser

Jeweller

Woodturner

Sculptor / Letter Cutter

Furniture Maker

Knitwear Designer

Jeweller / Goldsmith

Tapestry Weaver

Metalwork Artist

⁶<http://www.pierartscentre.com>

CONFIDENCE TO TRY NEW THINGS

VALUE With respect to an emerging generation of craft makers, those interviewed at earlier stages in their development recognised Orkney as offering plenty of opportunities for new work.

This confidence isn't just reflected in following traditional craft business development, but in organising a small, creative festival and reaching an interested local audience, or basing a more contemporary small knitwear business in Orkney confident 'you can make a name and get your voice heard' as they can easily differentiate without too much competition.

A CULTURE OF STORYTELLING MARKET With such a rich landscape of heritage comes an Orcadian identity for storytelling, symbolised in the traditional Orkney chair with a tall, woven, 'hooded' back to protect from the often wild elements. A maker of such chairs expressed his pride in making such a symbol and sees a growing interest for both locals and visitors to own a piece of such stories. This appears as one of the great appeals of craft makers in Orkney (and beyond) as they capture valuable stories in their work as local knowledge or wisdom that would otherwise fade away. Another participant shared how a local mentor on a small Orkney island claimed more knowledge of his island's ancient sites than archaeologists, expressed through stories of the Laird trying to push them into the sea.

"THERE'S A POINT THAT YOU REACH IN YOUR CAREER WHERE YOU CONSIDER 'HOW AM I GOING TO MOVE THAT PRACTICE ON UP A LEVEL?' [...] AND BECAUSE OF THIS INTEREST IN EDUCATION AND ENABLING AND FACILITATING FOR OTHERS, THAT REALLY HAS, CERTAINLY IN THE LAST FIVE TO SIX YEARS, THAT'S THE THING THAT'S TAKEN PRIORITY."

Orkney-based Printmaker

"ESPECIALLY FOR SOMEBODY NEW STARTING UP NOW, IF YOU GO AND SPEAK TO ANYBODY THAT'S BEEN OPEN AND ON THE TRAIL FOR FIVE YEARS, TEN YEARS, TWENTY YEARS, YOU GET THE BENEFIT OF THEIR EXPERIENCE. WHEN I WAS DOING MY BUSINESS PLAN I WENT ROUND AND ASKED PEOPLE WHO HAD BEEN OPEN AT THAT TIME, 'WHAT WAS IT LIKE? HOW MANY FOLK DID THEY SEE? WHAT KIND OF INCOME DID THEY MAKE?'"

Orkney-based Jeweller

B. Skara Brae Neolithic settlement on the mainland of Orkney (Johnson, 2018)



C. Woodturner gallery space at his home workshop on the Orkney Craft Trail (Johnson, 2018)

Shetland

CULTURAL IDENTITY NETWORK Island life and industries are very much alive and at the forefront across Shetland, with fishing vessels and oil rigs sat alongside fine examples of old stone brochs, and textiles heritage most prominent through bold Fair Isle patterns and delicate Shetland lace. However, many of the makers interviewed expressed the importance of their cultural identity in personal contexts, as much as heritage-based ones. One participant reflected that during her development she doubted the integrity of what she was doing when exposed to the conceptual processes of practitioners who had gone to art school. She later developed a confidence that her work was driven by her relationship with place in ways that the work of other practitioners wasn't. For another, a furniture maker, his parents' farm became available when looking to grow his business, allowing him to continue a relationship with the land through crofting, while also allowing him access to land 'right up to the sea' for potential expansion (see image D). Another participant recalled how her relatives had 'dumped all our rubbish in the sea because there was no refuse collection or anything like that,' which now inspires her to collect pottery pieces from the beach to restore into jewellery pieces.

UNIQUE AMBITIONS KNOWLEDGE This combination of heritage and personal identity can be seen to feed into the craft knowledge of these makers to reveal distinct ambitions. For the fused-glass maker, growing up and working on Shetland's northern-most island was a major driver for her to develop her business as 'an asset for Shetland but just very much an asset for Unst.' Another practitioner saw a unique combination of their knowledge and interest with traditional textiles as offering (see image E) a role to play in its survival in Shetland, despite not being a Shetlander.

Such personal ambitions for makers often exposed a resistance to demanding clients, cruise ship tourism or

8 interviews in July 2018

AN OVERVIEW OF THE DISCIPLINES REPRESENTED IN THESE INTERVIEWS.

Craft Gallery Director

Fused-Glass Maker

Basket Weaver / Jeweller

Textiles Studio

Knitwear Designer / Jeweller

Fashion Designer

Furniture Maker

Multi-Media Artist

engaging local associations, as they are sensitive to their practice feeling like a chore. This issue can be prevalent across the craft sector, propagating ideas of them being a 'lifestyle' business, when they regard themselves less an economic actor, but a cultural actor.

MOVING TRADITION FORWARD

VALUE A surprisingly common word among makers in Shetland, not just for themselves but for their peers as well, was that they saw themselves as being quite innovative. This was associated with being islanders, and remote islanders at that, who could be quite resourceful and inventive as part of thriving in island life. This innovation happens at a small scale, but was felt to offer significant cultural impact. The interviewee who ran a textiles studio reflected how he'd 'shown local industry that it's possible to base tourism on textiles [...] in a high quality kind of way.' The textiles and jewellery maker reflected on her view of innovating craft in Shetland that captures many makers' sentiments.

BRIDGING THE POTENTIAL MARKET

There was recognition that Shetland was benefitting from broadening interest in traditional music festivals and textiles, as evidenced in September's annual Wool Week festival⁷, as well as from growing cruise ship tourism. Alongside the recently opened Mareel arts centre providing a cultural hub in Shetland's main town of Lerwick for screen, music and performance, Bonhoga Gallery⁸ (see image A) has also emerged as an important venue in central Shetland for showcasing contemporary crafts 'to take arts policy outwith the main town and have it delivered in a rural area of Shetland.' These platforms were recognised by most interviewees as providing increasing opportunities for craft makers and the time seems ripe to bring together many interested parties for more strategic discussions for Shetland to shape a collectively rich creative future.

"BECAUSE [THE ISLE OF] YELL NEEDS EMPLOYMENT AND THIS IS ONE WAY OF KEEPING EMPLOYMENT IN THE ISLANDS. AND IT'S BECAUSE IT'S WHERE I LIVE AND I LIKE LIVING HERE. MY PARTNER LIVES IN LONDON SO IF I WANTED TO LIVE IN A CITY I'D MOVE BACK TO LONDON. I WANTED TO LIVE UP HERE BECAUSE IT'S QUIET AND THERE'S A LOT OF FREEDOM TO DO WHAT I WANT, BUT ALSO BECAUSE IT'S HIGH PROFILE - BECAUSE IT'S ON AN ISLAND."

Textile Studio, Shetland

"SO I HOPE THAT [...] I CAN TRY AND LOOK AT MY WORK IN THE SAME WAY; THAT YOU'RE CREATING SOMETHING NEW OUT OF HISTORY OR OUT OF DAILY LIVES. [...] I REALLY LIKE THINGS THAT ARE NEW, SO I'M INNOVATING FAE WHAT HAPPENS AND I'VE JUST DESIGNED SOMETHING THAT I'M GOING TO RUN IN WORKSHOPS AT WOOL WEEK, WHERE I'VE TAKEN FAIR ISLE KNITTING AND I'VE COMBINED IT WITH ANOTHER TYPE OF KNITTING SO THAT YOU CAN GET THREE COLOURS IN A ROW."

Knitwear Designer/
Jeweller, Shetland

⁷<https://www.shetlandwoolweek.com>

⁸<https://www.shetlandarts.org/venues/bonhoga>



D. View to St Ninians
Isle from Bigton on
Shetland Mainland
(Johnson, 2018)



E. Looms and
workspace in Global
Yell Textiles Studio,
Yell, Shetland
(Johnson, 2018)

Highlands+Islands

HOMEMAKER / PLACE MAKER

NETWORK Across the interviews a pattern emerged regarding how participants developed as craft professionals. This often involved personal accounts of making a home for themselves with their partners or families in their chosen rural place, with many travelling from other places and seeking a connection with the local communities, landscape and way of life. Three makers even took on historic properties, such as a traditional blackhouse on Lewis or old barns (see image F) and crofts, and would renovate them as part of their home-making journey. As their businesses developed, their craft became a more prominent part of local life. The furniture maker on Bute discovers that he's known as the 'local wood guy' and was proudly commissioned to make a public bench out of a dying old tree famous to locals. One contemporary jeweller in Plockton, recognised nationally and beyond, holds her annual show in the local village hall as she embraces being seen as the local jeweller. This journey of homemaker developing their craft seems to frequently evolve into playing a nuanced yet visible part in place-making.

THE SKILL OF ADAPTING

KNOWLEDGE Interviewees reported that there is a recognised precariousness to running a craft business in such rural places. However, continuously needing to adapt builds valuable experience. One particular jeweller found external circumstances could severely disrupt regular planning, perhaps due to seasonal bad weather or even having to manage a successful collection, and has tried to balance this with teaching and travelling. Another, a potter, finds she's doing seasonal work around summer tourism and making items in time for Christmas. This offers viable income, but can struggle to evolve her work and develop effectively in the ways she'd like to. This skill of adapting was viewed by one participant (and reflected across many cases) as offering unique knowledge combinations available nowhere else.

8 interviews in August and September 2018

AN OVERVIEW OF THE DISCIPLINES REPRESENTED IN THESE INTERVIEWS.

Economic Development Officer – Outer Hebrides

Potter – Isle of Skye

Kiltmaker – Lewis

Furniture Maker – Isle of Bute

Jeweller – Western Highlands

Jeweller – Western Highlands

Jeweller – Black Isle

Potter – Lewis



View over Stornoway
Harbour on the Isle of
Lewis (Johnson, 2018)

HIGH RELATIVE IMPACT VALUE There were striking examples of the interviewees providing value to local activities and communities. One jeweller has sought to develop environmentally friendly jewellery making, by both developing a studio in Inverness focused on such practice and pioneering a partnership with the RSPB 'to produce a collection of jewellery inspired by the RSPB projects [...] to highlight and encourage support for species in need' (see image G). Another jeweller shared how alongside their practice they teach jewellery-making in local schools and has been very proud to see four children go on to be jewellers. This theme also reflects many of the accounts presented already, where local heritage or assets gain value through the work of craft makers, helping to create a sense of place for many people. For communities that are often fragile in nature due to a lack of infrastructure and challenges in depopulation, such positive contributions can make a tremendous difference.

FRAMING A SECTOR MARKET When considering how craft makers across the Highlands & Islands identify and reach key markets, there are often three key factors highlighted. These can be broadly characterised as being working with local tourism, working with local residents and services, and online or through local industry. However, many of those who make up the crafts sector operate unique businesses with distinct audiences. When efforts are made to frame makers collectively, such as at trade fairs, one participant felt they were 'often a waste of time and money doing a local project or organisation a favour' as there's 'the wrong audience for your price point.' Conversely, in the Outer Hebrides, this challenge of clustering makers is made difficult when a local industry dominates the narrative.

"THE FACT THAT I'M THE ONLY ONE BALANCING CROFTING AND KILT-MAKING ON THE EDGE OF A REMOTE ISLAND, REACHING A WIDE AUDIENCE... TO ME MY PRACTICE IS INNOVATION."

Kiltmaker, Isle of Lewis

"WITH THERE BEING SUCH A PRESENCE OF HARRIS TWEED IN ALL THE CRAFT SHOPS, IT MAKES IT VERY HARD FOR TOURISTS TO DISCERN BETWEEN BASIC MAKERS AND HIGH-QUALITY MAKERS – SO THERE'S EFFORTS TO ENSURE QUALITY CAN SHINE IN THE RIGHT WAYS."

Economic Development Officer, Outer Hebrides



F. Converted barn as furniture maker's workshop in Bute (Johnson, 2018)



G. Master prototype of puffin model as part of RSPB jewellery commission (Johnson, 2018)

Perspectives on CRAFT+ PLACE

From across the interviews, a selection of themes emerged to reveal both challenges and opportunities among Highlands & Islands craft makers. We have broken these down into themes that firstly reflect craft maker perspectives, and then perspectives on the role of place, with short summary descriptions.

Craft Perspectives

PERSONAL JOURNEYS Many of the participants' experiences reflected very personal journeys to their current situation, whether due to family circumstances, local connections, creative residencies or personal ambitions.

DRIVEN BY PRACTICE Most of the participants interviewed have developed a high quality-level, which exposed a difficult model to sustain in the region where their next piece of work is usually driven by their own interests, rather than producing similar, multiple products to an established market.

FEELS UNIQUE The very fact some participants do their work in such rural communities, following personal combinations of skills and experience, was often described as enabling them to differentiate themselves.

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS A key commonality between the participants was the importance or value of close relationships with their customers where they often felt telling their story and seeing work up close was a key component in communicating the value of their work.

INCREASING VALUE OF DIGITAL Some participants recognised the important role of social media in raising their profile and gaining a wider audience, whereas a few seemed to find it largely at odds to how they wanted to work, but showing general movement towards its increasing use.

RESPECTED QUALITY There was a common urge among participants to prove their quality in relation to the wider, contemporary crafts sector, as they found their rural situation cast them as lesser intellectual or contextual forms of craft, whereas they saw themselves offering something just as rich.

SPACE FOR DEVELOPMENT Most participants were working for long hours from workshops or studios within or attached to their homes, which ensured that any growth they made would be necessarily slow due to limitations in capacity to produce, store or indeed expand.

Place Perspectives

VALUE SHARING WITH PEERS While many participants expressed significant time working alone as their normal working pattern, there was wide acknowledgement of both enjoying and seeking opportunities to meet, share and collaborate with peers through exhibiting together or through craft association events and meetings.

OPPORTUNITIES + INSPIRATION Alongside places inspiring processes of making through natural landscape, local culture or stories of heritage, where creative communities were more prevalent, such as Orkney, there seemed to be an appreciated level of choice and opportunity to develop their craft or business going forward.

PART OF HERITAGE STORY Makers' relationships with heritage were not only expressed as keeping certain forms of craft knowledge alive, but could be understood as creating authentic forms of contemporary heritage for locals and visitors current experiences of such places.

OVERCOMING LIMITATION Remoteness of where many makers lived and worked arose in all interviews as providing practical challenges, with accessible postage, space and internet seen as essential, however, the responses to these challenges often exposed an entrepreneurial, constructive attitude as part of overcoming them.

MARKET vs COMMUNITY Those establishments and makers seeking to represent high-quality arts and crafts often found themselves turning away local amateur or part-time makers, while wanting to be visibly supportive members of their local communities.

FINDING SHARED SPACES FOR DISPLAY Options for local spaces to display work and reach key audiences were seen as severely limited, with temporary events, seasonal markets and annual festivals highly valued and a willingness to cooperate to increase such opportunities.

TRYING TO BALANCE GROWTH Most makers acknowledged a pressure to grow in response to emerging demands from their key audiences, which often revealed participants' resistance or limitations to growth, both to avoid the associated responsibilities and how it might disrupt their interests and practice.

Reflections on CRAFT+ PLACE

This pamphlet aims to offer insights and understanding of the motivations and experiences of craft makers, where opportunities and challenges may vary between sub-regions of the Highlands & Islands, and where commonalities may lie between makers. Craft businesses across the region are fragile by their nature as they can depend on individuals or relatively small groups of makers committed to developing their practice, often in relation to cultural identity and heritage, balanced by income rather than driven by it. As such, Highlands & Islands makers will often reflect the fragility of the places and communities they work within, while equally contributing to a rich sense of place as part of establishing themselves.

Orkney reflected a place of opportunity and visibility for many craft makers, following a generation that have managed to establish and thrive. However, there remains a question on how far the next generations of makers can sustain such buoyancy and legacy when craft businesses follow such personal and unpredictable trajectories. Shetland revealed a strong sense of ambition and tradition among makers, but also opportunities for greater cooperation still to be bridged. This includes a certain attitude and awareness that to do so means to be fairly innovative in their outlook. Across the Highland & Islands, makers would strike a balance through unique combinations of roles and projects to make themselves viable. However, these required fairly constant adaptation to sustain personal motivations, creative development and access to their preferred markets.

From the case studies and themes presented there are four key reflections and recommendations that may help in understanding and employing the role of 'place' for craft makers in the Highlands & Islands.

1. BRING CRAFT AND PLACE INTERESTS TOGETHER

Craft interests are often closely intertwined with the places where makers are based. Due to the time and space that makers often prioritise when developing their practice, they can develop a deep knowledge and relationship with local heritage and landscapes. The work that they generate may in turn represent the values of such places for other audiences. Bringing craft and place interests together seeks to bring these qualities of local values to the fore and develop demand for craft as part of efforts in place-making and community-building.

2. STIMULATING PERSONAL JOURNEYS

Each participant's journey towards establishing themselves as craft professionals can be seen as unique and highly responsive to family situations, local influences and other external factors. When participants have

achieved moments of progress, they have cited using existing services, such as Business Gateway or grant funding, and other local makers at those points of need. Such moments are usually self-driven, where confidence and opportunity both play a major role. How far do support services recognise those factors that stimulate such confidence, such as finding validity in a community or market? And how do they ensure visibility and accessibility to resources in those moments of need? Such questions may need to be explored collectively, including between makers, and built upon smaller units of resource and activity, such as projects, skills development, access to space and equipment.

3. EMBRACE THOSE TAKING A LEAD

Certain experienced practitioners were distinctive for taking on responsibilities aside from their core practice. Sometimes this would mean taking on

mentoring roles, running skills workshops or managing studio spaces. Other times it meant taking leading roles in associations, events or even investing in and providing opportunities for other makers. Such figures emerge as a crucial strategic resource due to their knowledge and influence and often already lead funding bids and projects. As such, this opens up further questions to be explored around what is the role of such leaders in a fragmented community? Do they emerge in specific circumstances and how are these circumstances limited by other factors? The ambition could then be to offer leadership training offering knowledge of funding options and how to leverage limited means, local stakeholders and access strategic advice.

4. OFFERING BALANCED GROWTH

When recognising the drivers and interests of craft makers, more often than not they are based on developing the quality of their skills and outputs, while achieving a balanced business model to make their work viable. Most decisions they make for their business hinge on preserving this balance, while feeling like they are making progress in their practice. This is largely a qualitative industry, so services and stakeholders are best coordinated around engaging the quality and qualities of craft making. This means ensuring an important role for those with knowledge of the industry, and experience of the contexts of place as well. This also means engaging those different levels of quality in craft making, being inclusive of insights on price levels and different markets, in order to gain a shared understanding of how to differentiate across limited marketing outlets.

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